



The

Overprint

Newsletter of the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club

Stan Raugh, Editor
4217 8th Avenue, Temple, PA 19560-1805
Tele: 610-921-5822

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**Most Meetings Held the first Tuesday of Every Month at 7:00 p.m.
Meeting Site: Berkshire Commons, 5485 Perkiomen Avenue (Route 422)
Turn North on Lincoln opposite of the Dairy Queen.
Proceed 300 feet, turn left on Washington and look right of center at the stop sign.**

Monday, August 6 at 6:00 p.m.

Picnic and Auction

**St. John's Lutheran Church
45 North Reading Avenue, Boyertown
Note change of time, date and place!!!**

**If you are joining us for the picnic and have not signed up,
please call Barbara Brown at 610-469-2758**

There is a limit of 10 times for the auction, so bring your best material!

**There will be games for spouses and friends who are not interested in the auction.
If you wish to play, please bring one WRAPPED gift.
Those who are not participating are also invited to bring a prize!**

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And the winner is!

Here say has it that Mike Matus won the \$5.00 attendance drawing, but was vacationing in Florida. Somehow, even though he did not buy a ticket, he won the \$75.00 50/50 drawing, but did not qualify.

Correction:

An updated report filed by one of our correspondents indicated that Carmen Spadora was present and won the 50/50 drawing of \$20.00. Beth Kase was not present to win the attendance drawing. Sorry, Mike!

Where is it now—Guns from the O. K. Corral?

By Stan Raugh

On October 26, 1881, the most famous gunfight of the Old West unfolded in a small vacant lot near the O. K. Corral.

Lawman Virgil Earp, backed by his brothers, Wyatt and Morgan, and assisted by former dentist-turned-gambler Doc Holiday, together faced members of the Cowboy gang.

In 1881, the word cowboy meant cattle rustler and the Cowboy gang, reputed to number about a hundred members, regularly raided across the border, stealing so many cattle that the Mexican government threatened war. The Cowboys also robbed stage coaches, and branched out into other criminal areas.

Members of the Cowboy gang had been walking around town that day, telling people they were gunning for the Earps and breaking fire arms laws.

Bad blood between the Earp alliances and the Cowboys had been brewing for a long time.

Basically, the Cowboys were generally well received by country ranchers who hated Mexico. Remember, the Alamo was only about 55 years prior and the Mexican War closer yet. The Cowboys also represented cheap cattle to resell.

The Earps were allied to the towns people who were miners attracted by the recent silver strike. They tended to be family people and wanted law and order. The Earps were 'Lincoln' men and related to the politics of many in Tombstone. The Cowboys were mostly ex-Confederates who related to the older families living in the area before the Tombstone strike.

I have read a few books and many articles on the gunfight and always wondered why it took place in that vacant

lot. It took a long time to realize that Doc Holiday rented a room at Fly's photographic studio next door to the lot and the Cowboys may have been hanging around to assassinate him. Holiday had taken huge amounts of money from them in poker games.

When the confrontation occurred, Ike and Billy Clanton, Tom and Frank McLaury and Billy Claiborne were present for the Cowboys. Claiborne ran and Ike Clanton supposedly grabbed Wyatt Earp, begging for his life since he was unarmed, then ran away.

The three that were left died. On the Earp side, everyone was wounded, except cool acting Wyatt Earp who escaped without a scratch.

It was later claimed that Frank McLaury was also unarmed, but it is likely his gun was picked up by a Cowboy sympathizer before the gunpowder cleared in attempt to make it look like murder.

The whole affair consisted of about 30 shots fired in 30 seconds. The participants were about six feet away from each other. Wyatt Earp made out the best, as not only was he unscathed, he also got a U. S. Stamp issued with his image.

The whole affair is a fascinating study of the Old West, one of the few true gunfights. Later, Morgan Earp would be assassinated and an attempt on Virgil Earp would leave him partially paralyzed. Wyatt would go on a revenge ride and with the help of friends and money from Wells Fargo (Wyatt was an undercover agent for them) he would kill a disputed number of the Cowboys and break their power.

The question is, where are the guns that were used in the fight? I have postcard showing a gun alleged to be one that Wyatt Earp used in the gunfight but can't track it down. Most historians think they are lost to history.